

REMARKS**Discussion of Claim Rejections under 35 U.S.C. 102(b)**

The Examiner rejected Claims 13, 15, and 39 under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by LOTOS (US 3,880,969).

LATOS's Disclosure

Latos discloses a method of preparing an open-celled aromatic foam, which comprises curing a thermoset resin-ceramic mixture, firing the mixture, and sintering. (Abstract, and column 1, lines 14-32, Claim 1)

Claim 13

Claim 13 of the present invention reads as follows (emphasis is added);

13. A method for preparing a porous ceramic body with excellent thermal insulation property, the method comprising:

an impregnation step in which a polymer sponge having a three-dimensional porous network structure with open cells is immersed in an inorganic adhesive, such that the polymer sponge is completely impregnated with the inorganic adhesive;

a dewatering step in which the inorganic adhesive is partially removed from the polymer sponge impregnated with the inorganic adhesive so as to create pores in a portion of the open cells in the three-dimensional porous network structure, such that the polymer sponge is coated with the inorganic adhesive at an amount selected according to the desired density of the porous ceramic body; and

a drying step in which the polymer sponge from which the inorganic adhesive had been partially removed in the dewatering step is dried so as to cure the inorganic adhesive.

Claim 13 of the present invention is directed to a method for preparing a porous ceramic body, comprising steps of immersing a polymer sponge in a liquid inorganic adhesive, removing a portion of the inorganic adhesive, and curing the inorganic adhesive.

The Examiner stated "LATOS discloses... impregnate a polyurethane foam... removed of excess slurry and dried," implying Latos's steps anticipate the steps of the present invention.

Applicant respectfully disagrees with the Examiner.

Latos's steps of impregnating, squeezing out, and drying seem to anticipate the similarly-named corresponding steps of the present invention, but they are distinctly different in preparing the porous structure. In Latos's method, the porous structure is not made even after through the three steps: impregnating, squeezing out, and drying. The pores are formed by firing the now-fully-impregnated open celled-organic sponge. Thereby, the open cells of the open-celled sponge are filled with the aqueous slurry, and the very sponge structure portions are fired away to leave as pores.

In contrast, the method according to the present invention, the pores are formed at the end of the dewatering step. The polymer sponge is impregnated completely right after the impregnating step. But, through dewatering step, the inorganic adhesive is partially removed to leave pores behind, in which the polymer sponge is coated with the inorganic adhesive, not filled up. Therefore, the created pores take place in substantially the same locations of the empty spaces of the three-dimensional porous network structure. Therefore, the three-dimensional porous network structure does not have to be fired and gotten rid of as ashes.

That is, even though they sound alike, the dewatering step of the present invention is distinctly different from the step of squeezing out excess slurry of Latos. The drying step of the present invention is also different from the step of drying of Latos. The porous structure is obtained after the dewatering step in the present invention, while it is only the fully-filled-up sponge block, in which no pores can be located, that was obtained after the step of drying in Latos's method.

Therefore, it is quite apparent that Latos's method does not include every steps equivalent to those of the present invention.

Applicant respectfully request withdrawal of the rejections.

Discussion of Claim Rejections under 35 U.S.C. 103(a)

The Examiner rejected Claim 14 under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Latos, Claim 16 over Latos in view of Yasuda et al. (US 3,886,100), Claim 17 over Latos in view of Horiuchi et al. (US 5,919,546), Claim 18 over Latos in view of Jin (US 6,296,699), Claim 19 over Latos in view of Boutle (US 4,157,424), Claim 20 over Latos in view of Crooke et al. (US 4,332,753), Claims 21-23, 29, and 40 over Latos in view of Tansill (US 4,272,898) and Fuma et al. (US 4,623,499), Claim 24 over Latos in view of Tansill and Fuma, and further in view of Yasuda, Claim 25 over Latos in view of Tansill and Fuma, and further in view of Horiuchi, Claim 18 over Latos in view of Tansill and Fuma, and further in view of Jin, Claim 27 over Latos in view of Tansill and Fuma, and further in view of Boutle, Claim 28 over Latos in view of Tansill and Fuma, further in view of Crooke, Claim 30-32, 38, and 41 over Latos in view of Andersson, Claim 33 over Latos in view of Andersson, and further in view of Yasuda, Claim 34 over Latos in view of Andersson further in view of Horiuchi, Claim 33 over Latos in view of Andersson further in view of Jin, Claim 33 over Latos in view of Andersson further in view of Boutle, and Claim 37 over Latos in view of Andersson further in view of Crooke.

In response, Applicant submits that since the dependent claims depend from the amended Claim 13 or 39 directly or indirectly and the cited references do not remedy the deficiency of Latos as submitted regarding the 102 rejection in the above, the dependent claims are patentable for themselves. Applicant respectfully submits that the Claims 14-21 and 31-38 are distinctly different from the cited references.

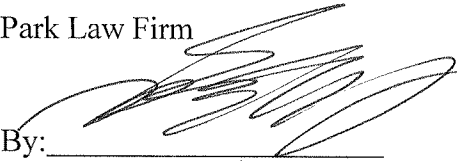
CONCLUSION

The applicant believes that the rejections were obviated by the amendment of claims, and the application is now in condition for allowance: therefore, reexamination, reconsideration and allowance of the claims are respectively requested. If there are any additional comments or requirements from the examination, the applicant asks for a non-final office action.

The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge payment of any additional fees associated with this communication, or credit any over-payment to Deposit Account No. 16-0310.

Very truly yours,

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